USU Agribusiness Degrees Will Prepare Students in Mauritius and Beyond

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Utah State University is partnering with a new higher education institution in Mauritius, making USU's agribusiness and international agribusiness programs in the Department of Applied Economics the first to offer four-year degrees from an American university in that country.

USU President Stan Albrecht and President Spalding Jugganaikloo of The American Campus (TAC) signed a partnership agreement April 6 after months of planning and approvals from university trustees and the Utah State Board of Regents, and discussed how the new school and these bachelor's degrees will provide promising opportunities for people in and around Mauritius, an East African island nation.

Students enrolled at The American Campus will study the same curriculum as students in USU's agribusiness or international agribusiness program at any of its campuses. Ken White, dean of USU's College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, explained that the courses will be taught in English and USU faculty will work with faculty at TAC and evaluate instruction and testing.

"These are two exceptional degree programs that will help students and can facilitate success across the globe," White said.

Jugganaikloo said although there are universities in Mauritius, many people leave their homes to attend schools in the United States and Europe and then tend to stay there for employment. His goal has long been to make education accessible in Mauritius for people there and from other Sub-Saharan African countries. Jugganaikloo said the USU degrees are a great fit for TAC for several reasons.

"The degrees have an added entrepreneurial element that is a very big piece of what we are trying to accomplish in Mauritius," Jugganaikloo said. "These degrees are very important to our goals. Our first recruitment efforts for this program will be in Nigeria and Ghana where 35 percent of the economy is agricultural."

That agricultural economy is built on small farms run by individuals and families. The business skills and entrepreneurial mindset that are core to the USU programs will be important to students in the growing African middle class as they will be prepared to make positive impacts and create jobs when they return to their countries.

Returning to his country to provide opportunities for others has been on Jugganaikloo's mind and heart since he left Mauritius 24 years ago to get an education in the United States.

"I'm a firm believer that the best thing we can do for developing areas of the world is to give people access to education in programs that prepare people to work," Jugganaikloo said. "Education brings economic development, peace and long-term opportunities. Our goal is to train future business and political leaders in the region."

TAC's Provost, Loretta Palmer, said one reason TAC looked to USU as a partner is USU's experience with educating people beyond the flagship Logan campus.

"We really think this is the right program and the right faculty for this partnership," said USU Provost Noelle Cockett. "We are excited about this partnership, and it fits with our land-grant mission to provide excellent and accessible education."

Albrecht added that the partnership is another example of how USU is one university with many locations and is redefining "place" beyond what was envisioned when the land-grant system was established.

Vist The American Campus website for more information.

Contacts: Dillon Feuz, 435-797-2296, Dillon.Feuz@usu.edu; Kristin Dahlin, Kristin@tacampus.us

Writer: Lynnette Harris, 435-797-2189, Lynnette.Harris@usu.edu
Utah State University President Stan Albrecht and President Spalding Jugganaikloo of The American Campus (TAC) signing the partnership agreement April 6.